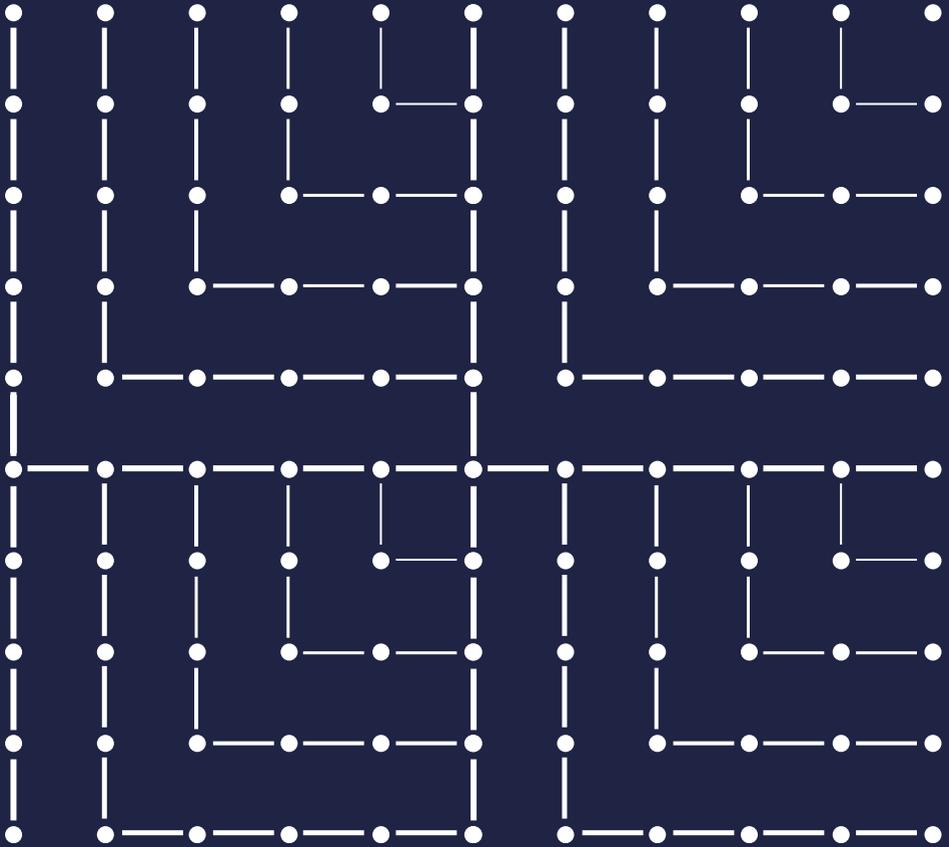


A Vision for Britain. Planned.



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Can it be right that a child born 25 miles from London can have one set of life chances and a similar child, with similar capabilities, born 25 miles from Plymouth, or Doncaster, or Stoke has a completely different set of likely outcomes – unless he or she moves...? Clearly not.

The One Powerhouse Consortium, supported by The Sir Hugh and Lady Ruby Sykes Charitable Trust, believes that a substantial part of the problem of regional inequality can be solved not just by money, but by the transformative potential of spatial planning.

Why Spatial Planning?

Spatial planning is the 'where' of decisions. It looks at a defined geographical area (say Scotland, or the Midlands) and makes an assessment of everything contained in that area – towns, cities, housing, schools, universities, roads, rails, airports, offices, factories, hospitals, energy sources, museums, parks and leisure activities - and makes a plan to develop those assets for the benefit of the people who live in that region, now and for the future.

It is well understood that countries and regions around the world have used spatial planning to focus political will, economic activity and social reform to great effect. Notable examples include Germany's Rhine-Ruhr, Holland's Randstad and New York City's Regional Plan Association.

The One Powerhouse Consortium, working with recognised leaders in the field, will create draft spatial plans for the 'mega regions' of England to sit alongside the existing spatial plans for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The advantage of spatial planning, as seen in other developed nations, shows how building from the bottom up with detailed local plans around towns and cities, put together with

coherent regional plans that address wider issues of infrastructure, investment and other strategic assets, under a light-touch national framework, bear significant fruit.

The Value of Place and Scale

A range of agencies and commentators have reached similar conclusions about the UK's long term rebalancing and the government's Industrial Strategy represents an important step in the right direction - but in focusing on sectors it pays insufficient attention to the dynamic potential of local economics and politics.

The government recognises the role of local economic development – with Local Industrial Strategies now being developed by all 39 of England's Local Enterprise Partnerships – but this would be greatly enhanced by a coherent national approach to economic spatial planning. Both academic evidence and past experience suggests that regional spatial planning is best co-ordinated across population sizes of 6-12 million people.

Spatial Planning is already bearing fruit

There is evidence that spatial planning has already begun to deliver results in the UK. We are not alone in recognising that the two 'regional economies' that have the highest levels of productivity are those where there are coherent regional economic plans: London and Scotland.

Indeed, in England, there is good work taking place through some Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and Combined Authorities and Mayoralities but not all. In strategic planning and investment terms, these tend to be rather small and the outcome is rather patchwork.

Our Plan

The clear 'gap' in terms of economic planning in the UK, therefore, is at the level of the English regions. Any spatial strategy needs to bring together the best local industrial strategies and plans within a wider regional strategy framework.

The foundations of how this can be achieved are already present. The regions of England are already coming together: The Northern Powerhouse, The Midlands Engine, The Great South West and The Wider South East all exist as functional identities.

Our ambition is, in short, to work with these regional networks to prepare a series of draft spatial plans that will better enable decision-making and prioritisation of investment across the country and thus help the UK as a whole develop over the long term – creating opportunity for all, jobs for all and prosperity for all.

A Coalition of the Willing

The One Powerhouse Consortium understands that we are undertaking a daunting task.

That is why we are collaborating closely with Lord Kerslake's UK2070 Commission and with the respected think tank The RSA.

We are also delighted to be supported on the technical side by some of Britain's most respected planning consultancies: Atkins in the North, Barton Willmore in the Midlands and The South West and Aecom in the South East.

Together, we hope to show how well thought out, long term spatial planning can start as words and diagrams on a page and end up changing lives for the better – wherever in the UK those lives are lived.

Our ambitious goals will not be fulfilled without the help of business and political leaders from across the British Isles.

If you have a contribution to make and would like to be involved in our project please visit our website www.onepowerhouseconsortium.co.uk.
